2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner



gave rise to another Bush Negro nation known as the *Boni* tribe. There are also three other tribes today of less importance: the *Matawaai* on the Upper Saramacca River, the *Quintee-Matawaai* which is a sub-tribe on the Copenam, and the *Paramacca* on the Middle Marowyne with villages on both the French and Dutch sides of the river.

The tribal divisions are strictly enforced. Not only is intermarriage forbidden, but each tribe has its separate government, and each is referred to locally as a "river nation." Each tribe likewise has its own territory, and any poaching by hunters, fishers, or balata bleeders is rigorously punished. The ruler of the tribe is a king, or *granman*. Among the photographs is one of old Jankoeso, the kindly shrewd ruler of the Saramaccaner nation; the Aucaner ruler, Amekti, has just died, his place probably being taken by Matodja. The Boni granman is named Awensai.

The largest tribe is the Saramaccaner, with a population of about 14,000. Their village of Santi Gron (Sandy Ground), some twenty miles from Paramaribo on the Lower Saramacca River is the nearest of all Djuka villages to white civilization. But the main body of this tribe begins some ninety miles up the Surinam River from Paramaribo, and the villages are strung along the Surinam River for a hundred or more miles further on back into the interior. The names of some of these villages are: Nu Condree, Lombe, Gansee, Biodoti, Adawai, De Jun, Masumba Pratti, and Dahomey, and other towns of even more picturesque appellations: Boto-Passi, Poki Gron, Granman Condree, and many more.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramaccaner
Aucaner



and does not look with favour upon the white proselytizers.

The Granman can call a meeting of his captains at any time. They must attend, even though it involves days of rigorous travel. Although the captains look up to the Granman and acknowledge him as their superior, the connexion between them is not close enough to be considered a hierarchy. The "river nations" are not monarchies in any sense. The only laws promulgated by the Granman are those that affect the entire tribe.

Neither the captains nor the Granman have any privileges or prerogatives to set them apart from the undistinguished natives; there is no leisure class. They are all dependent upon their own efforts to earn a living, and work like anyone else in the village. Rank does not make social parasites out of them, as among us. The Granman's only external distinction is that sent by the white man, the tribute from the Dutch government. The type of social organization now prevalent among the Djukas, therefore, may be described as primitive communism.

The Aucaner, second in number to the Saramaccaner, are scattered in a less compact way over the rivers and creeks of the colony toward the French Guiana line. This tribe numbers about 6000 in population.

Just below the realm of the Saramaccaner tribe, at the junction of the Sara Creek and the Surinam River (see map facing page), are some of the Aucaner villages: Koffay Camp, Lebbi Doti, Lasa Baka, Pitchong, Baku, and other settlements. There are few villages on the long Sara Creek, but

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Aucaner
Saramaccaner
Boni



619 184 In general appearance and culture the Aucaners vary little from the other large tribe, the Saramaccaners.

[531] The art motifs and their treatment as displayed on the Aucaner wood carvings as a rule differ from those of the Saramaccaners. On the other hand, some of the pieces were found to be practically identical.

The Aucaner talkee-talkee also differs from that of the Saramaccaners, the former being more like the speech of the [197 198 191] Town Negroes. The Aucaners have no deepee-talkee or odo as have the Saramaccaners, but they have a dialect known as *Koropina* where a *p* or an *m* is spoken before the vowels in a word for the purpose of confusing strangers. A similar custom is prevalent among the Negroes of Curaçao, Dutch West Indies.

[291] The dress of the Aucaners is the same as that of the Saramaccaners, excepting that they affect more often the breast-cloth, the *wassapangye*, and the head-cloth, the *mussu*.

Among the Aucaners the toga garment is called the *yembah*, while it is called a camissa by the Saramaccaners. The barrier of palm leaves is called *chifunga* by the Aucaners and *azang pau* by the Saramaccaners.

[262 606 194] The system of food taboos and general culture are the same. There is no mother-in-law taboo among either the Aucaners or the Saramaccaner tribe.

[161] 648 The Boni tribe, which consists of about 900 people, is descended from escaped slaves who crossed the Marowyne River into French Guiana and who were allowed to remain there unmolested by the French authorities. This is the only

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577 all, toward one another as fellow tribesmen they are very honest and trust one another's word. Frequently it happens that among them one family leaves the camp to go on a journey or else is absent for some other reason, and that it must leave behind unfenced the cultivated land planted with rice, tubers, bananas, bakoven, and sugar cane. But never will another of them steal any of that. And similarly their dwellings are open, since the entrance is not closed off by any door; upon their departure they leave one thing and another in it, but they will never miss any-
626 thing upon their return. Certainly contributing to this is the circumstance that in the vicinity of everybody's property there is a sign or idolatrous image, which they call obia, to which great power is ascribed, and for those who might want to commit dishonest acts, the legend can be observed, as for the European:
784 "Beware of mantraps." The fear that they have of these obias is not unjustified, for if it should happen at any time that misuse of trust took place, then the culprit, however long it takes, upon discovery will not escape the revenge of the deceived, revenge which frequently consists in the administering of secret remedies whereby terrible diseases and sufferings, if not death, come about.

152 They are very concerned about the faithfulness of their
837 wife or wives, /35/ for the Bush Negro is very jealous, whereas the wives cannot be exonerated of being susceptible to seduction. Accordingly it happens among them more than once that marital fidelity is violated.

184 Of the various tribes, the Aucaners are the most
[177] civilized, but over against that also the craftiest, which can be
[157] attributed to their more frequent intercourse with Europeans.
[161] Among their tribes they are the most powerful, and their numerical strength is estimated at 4,000 to 5,000 souls.

123 According to the declaration of the Bush Negroes, no White has previously enjoyed the trust and attachment that I experienced from them. However, secretively they always conduct themselves toward the Whites, with respect to me they make an exception. If there is something secret among them that I should like to know, they will, upon my request, immediately and without any diffidence communicate it to me.

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# Agriculture among the Bush Negroes of the Marowijne /Maroni/

by D. C. Geijskes (1)

1. Government biologist with the Department of Internal Affairs, Paramaribo.

## 1. Introduction

When one goes to the small communities of the inhabitants of the bush who live in the interior districts of Surinam, one quickly sees, upon examination, the basis on which the maintenance of such communities rests. The struggle for existence among primitive peoples covers the food supply and the resistance that can be offered against illness and pests. These two factors ultimately determine the birth surplus, which as a result expresses the possibility for survival.

Among the Bush Negroes we see in the course of the years an increase in the population, an advance, therefore, in spite of the obstructions of nature. But this advance creates new problems. It was during the Medical-Scientific Expedition to the Southern Border of Surinam, held from February to July, 1952, that, in conjunction with the medical investigation in the gathering of data about the "housekeeping" of the Bush Negroes of the Marowijne /Maroni/ and the Tapanahoni, we were struck above all by the problem of the food supply and the food itself. There is little sense in paying attention only to medical care unless at the same time attempts are made to improve the food.

An important part of the food supply is produced by agriculture. This supplies the Bush Negroes with the most, but not the best food. Next to it a number of forest products serve to provide for the need for food fats, while hunting and fishing must provide the protein.

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13 seems too high to me), the ants can bring into the soil each year two to three tons of leaf material per hectare. As a result the soil would be so enriched with humus and, in addition, through the construction of the numerous nest corridors, receive so much extra ventilation that the oxygen content and the microbiological condition of this soil would tend to differ from the mineral soils in which the virgin forest is rooted. As proof of this, it is stated "that even the oldest ant-kapoeweri directly behind the villages shows no tendency to grow into normal high forest" (p. 13).

114 137 136 It does not seem correct to me to ascribe this kapoeweri phenomenon only to the presence and the activity of the leaf-cutting ants. In my opinion the ants here constitute a troublesome contributing factor, for when the virgin-forest grounds are abandoned by the population and no new food material is available to the ants while the kapoeweri gradually grows into higher forest, then the balance in the ant population re-establishes itself. This process takes place at a slow rate, depending on the local circumstances, but it leads to the re-establishment of the original situation. There is, however, one condition connected with it, namely, that the forest be left in peace for a long enough stretch.

241 134 Now this last is not the case for the grounds area of the Bush Negroes. They return too soon (within ten years) to clear grounds again, with the consequence that the soil becomes too exhausted and the recovery of the forest becomes impossible.

171 241 137 [136] Proof for this viewpoint is already provided by Stahel (loc. cit.) in his consideration of the agriculture of the upland Indians. The absence of the ant-kopoeweri there is not a matter of a lesser ant infestation, as Stahel /140/ believes -- for in places this is equally serious -- but of a less intensive use of the forest lands.

[161] 423 [361] The Indians are present in small numbers (a few hundred, as against thousands of Bush Negroes), while only communal plots are laid out for one village, and not different ones for each family. In addition, the Indians move frequently in order to find new hunting and fishing grounds.

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## 4. The Agrarian Law

241 There is yet another circumstance which adversely affects
423 the agriculture of the Bush Negroes. As among many primitive peoples, so also in the life of the Djoeka /Djuka/ customary law plays an important role. We have already seen that at least two grounds per year are laid out per household. In fact it comes down to this, that both the man and the woman possess a ground of their own. Now these two grounds do not lie next to each other or close to each other. On the contrary, the one ground is always hours away from the other one; it is to be found on the other side of the river or elsewhere along a forest creek. One might think that this is a kind of division of risks. In actuality it is a question of family property. The ground of the wife is cleared in the area of her family, and the ground of the man in his family complex. The grounds are thus laid out with reference to the large family and not with reference to the household. Each family has a definite area where it has the right to clear grounds. This area lies along a forest creek, or one lays out a path from the river through the forest, along which the grounds
[578] are cleared. Not infrequently, quarrels arise over the use of land by "unauthorized" persons on distinctly family land.

A Bush Negro thus cannot simply select a piece of forest for his ground wherever he pleases. He is bound by the law of family property. This applies not only to the families among themselves, but in a larger context also to the villages. Each village has its area within which the families from that village lay out grounds. Only through marriage can men lay out grounds for their wives in the area of another village.

These complications in agriculture lead to the circumstance that the hunger for land arises much sooner than would otherwise
[361] be the case. Add to this the fact that many Bush Negro villages remain in existence for a very long time, sometimes 100 years at
● [161] a stretch, in the same spot. It is therefore not surprising that through the growth in population in such centers, too, the limit of this predatory cultivation has been reached.

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October 1958 – January 1959), expeditions whose principal aim was the sociological study of these populations.

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## Social Structure and Way of Life

The Boni Refugee Blacks. The Boni are one of the above-mentioned tribes of the Refugee Blacks, reconstituted in the course of the eighteenth century by rebel African slaves who escaped from Surinam plantations (Dutch Guiana).

These tribes (Saramaka, Djuka, Paramaka, Boni) live for the most part along the rivers of the interior of Surinam. They group together a total of 25,000 persons.

With very rare exceptions, the Refugee Blacks are pure Africans. These populations, vigorous and well adapted to the country, have experienced in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a remarkable demographic increase, attested to by all the authors. Descended from small rebel groups which could not have contained more than a few hundred women, they are now estimated at more than 25,000 persons.

The Boni of the Upper Maroni, the subject of the present study, number approximately 800, of whom 660 are on the French bank (the villages of Boniville, l'Enfant Perdu, Loka, Asisi, Papaïston, and Kormotibo) and 140 on the Surinam bank (the village of Kotika). These villages were established long ago.

Each of them groups together a matrilineage, i.e., the descendants in the uterine line of one single founding ancestress; certain villages know their genealogy in its entirety back to this ancestress, who must have lived at the end of the eighteenth century. The members of the lineage are united by the cult of the ancestors, which binds them firmly to their natal village and to their land. The social system is based essentially on this cult, the chief of the village being above all the priest of the ancestors.

Strictly speaking, there is no marriage, but only an acknowledged concubinage which entails neither a contract between the

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164 the birth rate of the Boni is scarcely influenced by malaria. This is an essential difference between Blacks and Indians.

This immunity, regarded as an hereditary characteristic of the African Blacks, was well known by the Europeans of past centuries. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was thought that on account of this fact only the African Blacks could furnish a regular force in tropical countries. This is one of the principal causes of the slave trade.

/514/ -- An important impairment by skin affections. The Boni, before the creation of the Maripasoula medical center, showed many cases of pian, which attacked most of the children, leaving infirmities and widespread incapacities in certain adults.

Also observed were numerous cases of American forest cutaneous leishmaniasis (pian-bois), involving ulcers, sometimes very widespread, almost always infected, and able to lead to a terminal cachexia. Finally, 1% of the Boni manifested cases of leprosy in the course of development. The total incidence of the disease was estimated in 1957 at approximately 3%.

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[161] -- An important invasion of venereal diseases, notably of blennorrhagia, leading to the sterility of a large number of women and stopping the demographic increase.

This aspect of the pathology seems in keeping with the very free morals of the Boni and the instability of their unions.

In 1948 the Boni attributed an important part of the infant mortality to a form of meningitis which they call "pikin nenge siki," "the sickness of the little Blacks"; the symptoms described seem to fit cerebrospinal meningitis.

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114 Pathology of the Oayana Indians. Doctor Douvier, examining the Oayana in 1937, wrote: "The Indian does not show sores like the Negro; the Indian has epidemics."

Doctors who have examined the Indians of the interior in the course of recent years have made agreeing observations on their pathology, which can be summarized thus:

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164 -- the Indians, in contrast to the Blacks, suffer severely from malaria; no immunity appears among adults, who are more severely attacked than children. The size of the spleen in most cases simply increases in the course of life.

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161 Thus during the period 1895 to 1925, the Boni population
[128] doubled with each generation. These results are confirmed by
(173) the study of the genealogies. The present-day Boni, with the
[613] exception of about 5% of them who belong to recently founded lineages, are descended by known filiation from seven women who lived at the end of the eighteenth century.

It is possible that before the period to which this inquiry refers epidemics were produced and struck certain villages in particular, destroying entire lineages. In fact we cannot say anything certain about the evolution of the population before 1890. Let us only remember that this rate of reproduction of 200% per generation of 31 years represents the normal rate for the Refugee Blacks, in the absence of large epidemics and of venereal diseases and before any medical aid.

During the period 1925-1942, the Boni population did not vary (rate of reproduction $\frac{105}{100}$).

Since 1940, it has been increasing slightly, by 25% per 27 years, that is just under 1% per year.

163 Birth rate and mortality rate. Demographic balance. From 1
165 January 1956 to 31 December 1957, i.e., in two years, 39 children were born in the villages on the French bank (660 persons); and 21 persons died (including 5 children born during this period).

Rate of birth: 2.9% per year.

Rate of mortality: 1.6% per year.

161 Rate of increase: 1.3% per year.

The rate of increase of 1.3%, which corresponds incidentally to the theoretical calculation indicated above, is very much below that of the population of Cayenne and of the communes of
[164] the coast. If one considers that before 1920 it reached the remarkable value of 3% per year, one realizes the extent of the disaster brought about by venereal diseases.

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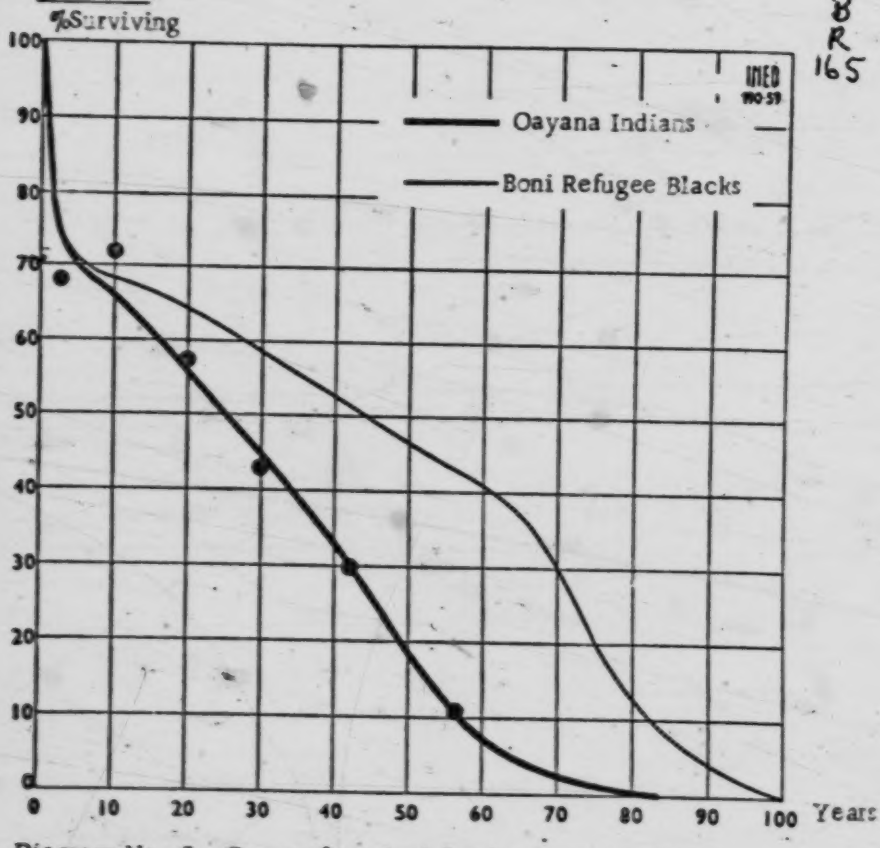


Diagram No. 5. Curve of survival for the Oayana Indians

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This rate of reproduction of 83% characterizes their behavior vis-à-vis the geographic environment modified since the arrival of the Europeans by their contribution of new microbial germs, just as 200% characterizes the behavior of the Refugee Blacks.

Before any kind of medical aid the group described here was dying out at the rate of 0.6% per year, i.e., it decreased on the average by one person every year.

This rate corresponds to the extinction of half in 103 years. It is not quite adequate to explain the reduction of the Oayana from 3,000 around 1780 to 500 in 1958. It is probable that at the moment of the first contact with the Europeans, at the end of the eighteenth century, the Oayana must have been decimated by the epidemics more severely than in our day.

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Thus the behavior of a human group, its fate as a people, and its very existence appear to be determined to a large extent by hereditary biological characteristics. This notion was seen clearly enough at the beginning of this century, but it has never been the object of thorough studies, the conditions for an incontestable experiment not being found together. Repudiated in the name of theoretical principles by the train of thought which has animated sociology for the past several decades, it has ended up by being completely lost from sight. Present-day sociology no longer takes into consideration the biological facts peculiar to the groups which it studies; one currently speaks of cycles of civilization, of laws of social change, of acculturation, etc., as if social facts had their own life and their own evolution, independent of the supposedly identical and interchangeable people. It is as though one claimed to study the psychism of the human being without taking his body into account, denying the influence of sex, age, sickness. Some have even managed to maintain that man is in all respects the product of the society from which he comes.

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182 In the case studied here the falsity of these theories is obvious. If the Indians disappear wherever the Blacks establish flourishing societies, it is because their biological characteristics are not suited to the conditions imposed by the geographic environment, whereas those of the Blacks are to the highest degree.

Seen from this angle, the fate of the Indians of the Amazonian forest becomes clear; their social behavior and in particular their collapse upon contact with European civilization find an explanation.

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[177] /534/ The relations of the Indians with the Europeans of past centuries have been equally influenced by their biological characteristics. Their inaptitude for prolonged effort came in part from their physical weakness. When the Blacks and the Indians of the Amazonian forest have been employed side by side for years as soldiers and porters, there can be no doubt on this point. The Black is a force of nature. The Indian of the great forest, often full of good will, is betrayed by his physical powers.

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241 177 experience of the American Indians, which seem the only utilizable ones in the interior of the country.

Thus these populations which are so varied have in large measure the same agriculture and the same food.

241 [262] [171] Basic crops are manioc, consumed in the form of couac (flour roasted and granulated) which is the base food, the Indian yam, and tubers analogous to taro (dachine, "Caribbean cabbage"). The Refugee Blacks plant mountain rice in addition. The Creoles do not plant rice but have on the other hand a greater variety of vegetables and fruits.

311 36 182 Men in Guiana live on the rivers; villages and cultivated lands are to be found on their banks; everywhere else one finds only the deserted forest; only Creole gold miners, constrained by their work, sometimes establish their villages far from watercourses.

181 182 171 The Refugee Blacks, like the Indians, love the rivers where they find, along with water and light, the possibility of moving without hindrance; they are a people of canoeists; their traditions are widely influenced by life on the river, and their mode of living finds in this a deep originality.

131 133 182 171 In fact, setting aside the gold miners' villages, we can say that the populations of the Guianas living by exploitation of the natural resources of the country have a linear habitat: it can be estimated not in surface but in length, for it is limited to a band of one kilometer along each watercourse accessible to pirogues. These watercourses are limited in number, for one can take for granted that at a distance of some 20 kilometers from the source of each river, the congestion caused by fallen trees and parasitic vegetation prevents easy movement.

[61] [226] Actually, considering the very low density of the population, the small rivers are scarcely utilized except as fishing places.

487 501 All the rivers are interrupted by falls and rapids which render the use of large boats impossible. The pirogues of the Refugee

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The Boni, about 1,000 in number, occupy the course of the Lawa between Abounasounga Falls to the north and the falls of the Litani to the south. Their "great villages," that is, their residential villages, are: Agodé (Boniville), Kotika, Asisi, Loka, Papaï'ston, Kormotibo, Lapé, and l'Enfant Perdu. Three small villages founded more recently are established on the lower course of the Maroni. The territorial implantation of the Boni has been disturbed by the settlement of Creole gold miners on their territory for three quarters of a century. Their demographic situation is mediocre and their tribal organization, compared to that of the other tribes, has lost much of its strength. However, they still make up a human grouping full of strength and originality.

The Djuka, whose "great villages" are in Surinam territory on the /11/ Tapanahoni, can be evaluated at 7,000 to 8,000 in total. At the height of demographic expansion, their farming villages swarm on both banks of the Maroni and on the islands, penetrating more and more deeply into the interior of French Guiana, where in places they form small temporary groupings living in symbiosis with the Creole gold miners; the Boni recognize their right to cross their territory but not that of establishing villages in it.

For a century the economy of the Refugee Blacks has been founded on a symbiosis with the Europeans and Creoles; they furnish specialized labor (construction, but above all, transport) in exchange for relatively high wages. This economy finds itself threatened by the gradual disappearance of gold mining; there is developing a tendency toward temporary emigration to the European work yards of Saint-Laurent analogous to that of the Saramaka of Surinam to French Guiana. This is a serious threat to the interior cohesion of the tribes.

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whom African blood predominates are seen; the mulattoes are in general traders, or practice small stock raising.

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The Refugee Blacks are the only population of interior Guiana who can be regarded as perfectly adapted to the environment and capable of subsisting there by their own means. They

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have a protection against malaria which operates thus: If the children suffer from this endemic disease, resistance appears with age, protecting adults from its attacks.

They are subject to serious skin diseases, notably to pian,

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but these maladies have few demographic consequences; only the Boni are seriously attacked by venereal diseases. The Djuka are in the process of very great demographic expansion.

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The strong tribal organization of these populations and their solid implantation on the ground render effective their methods of working, farming, hunting, and fishing, which assure them not only excellent provisionment but considerable means of exchange and a material standard of living superior to that of most of the populations of Africa. The techniques of the Refugee Blacks, especially as regards the squaring of wood, sawing, and building, procure for them resources comparable to those which the populations of the Ivory Coast get from coffee and cacao. /blank page/

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121 This is what necessitates as precise an inventory as possible of the population in its present state.

61 Matrilineal kin groups among the Djuka and Saramaka Refugee Blacks.
114 Authors who have described the social structure of the Djuka and
184 Saramaka, groupings appreciably more numerous than the Boni, have also called attention to the use of the words lo and bɛɛ, but give them a completely different meaning.

194 The organization they describe can be summarized thus:
571 Before making up tribes, the rebels lived in small groups
621 near the plantations from which they had escaped; these groups of composite origin were designated by the word lo which means: troop, band; the same word is used to designate a band of animals.

[162] These rebels used to belong to all the nations of the west
[103] coast of Africa. In spots there may have been an attempt at regroupings of elements belonging to the same nation, as proven by the village names Loango, Dahomey, among the Saramaka.
[622] But the majority of these small groups were very probably of heterogeneous origin; in each of these lo, the bravest and most capable was designated as head.

[648] After the recognition of the Djuka and Saramaka by the
[167] government of Surinam and their regrouping on the great rivers of the interior, these groups kept their unity since they had a de facto organization and leaders. They were naturally designated by the name of the plantation they had come from. We say for example Dju nẽnge for the former slaves of the Jews, Kɔ̃pani nẽnge for the former slaves of the Compagnie des Indes Orientales /East India Company/. /30/

174 In the course of the 19th century the total number of Refugee
613 Blacks increased very rapidly under the influence of a high birth
614 rate. The lineages in the proper meaning of the term bɛɛ, mean-
621 ing the descendants of the same ancestress, took on sufficient im-
571 portance to constitute distinct social units. They grouped in
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That this system is perfectly workable has been sufficiently demonstrated by the regular expansion for two centuries of the tribes of Refugee Blacks and by the good functioning of their institutions.

Thus the basic instability of the Indians of Guiana cannot be attributed to the influence of the geographical environment alone. It comes essentially from social and psychological factors.

/100/ STUDY OF FARMING HABITATIONS

We are now going to study the functioning of the farming habitations under the same aspects:

--Structure (composition of each one, kinship ties);

--Territorial implantation: nature and extent of rights over the land;

--Functioning.

Not all Boni have a farming habitation; about two-thirds of them are satisfied with the lands they occupy near the residence villages.

The farming habitations we are going to study more especially and which are situated between the mouth of the Inini and Simayé Falls to the south, group about a hundred persons belonging to the Dju, Lapé, Awara Bakka, and Papaïston lineages. Another group of farming habitations situated a little south of Kormotibo, which we shall study briefly and only so far as their composition is concerned, bring together about 60 persons. Finally, other very dispersed farming habitations exist, belonging principally to the Kotika lineage, some in the Maripasoula region, others in the Abattis-Kotika Falls /region/.

On the whole, the Boni farming habitations cannot be compared either as to importance or stability with the Djuka farming villages which are placed at intervals on the middle course of the Maroni, grouping 3,000 to 3,500 persons: this is easy to understand: the Djuka, continually short of land, are obliged,

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425 2) On the contrary, from the time that occupation of a region becomes habitual, even by groups of small numerical importance, people pay attention to the attribution of the lands. [361] [613] Thus it is assumed that the west bank of the Lawa south of the Atikati habitation up to Simayé Falls has belonged, since the end of the last century, to the Lapé lo, which was occupying it in 1957 by the Paako, Samo, Pwen, Saléni, and Makélé habitations.

423 613 241 361 3) Within each zone the rights remain joint and anyone of the same lo may come to settle there. Thus the farming habitations move around, but within a definite sector. Thus for example Kwaku (Lapé) abandoned in 1954 his habitation situated in the lands of the Lapé lineage (it was too damp in the rainy season, he prefers to content himself with the lands of the "great village"). He does not lose his rights because of this. If he decides eventually to come back, he will settle anywhere in the zone attributed to the Lapé lo.

182 161 241 361 425 It goes without saying that if the population were more dense, such a principle would be difficult to apply and that serious disputes would arise. But this mode of occupation of the soil is perfectly suitable, in their present situation, for the tribes of the Refugee Blacks, for it allows them to practice, with a minimum of friction, the seminomadism which the geographical environment and especially the manioc ant impose.

241 361 423 The zones occupied by the farming habitations rarely have a single holder: most often they are divided into separate sectors on different parts of the river.

504 613 361 423 Actually, as we have seen around the "great villages," each lineage possesses a certain number of "dégrads," or landing places, from which paths radiate. Each "dégrad" is rigorously reserved for the members of a lineage. The occupants of a farming village radiate from around their landing place until they